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ABSTRACT

As Jewish leadership began to study the numerous facets of the Jewish poverty problem, it became evident that a cooperative, coordinated communal activity was essential. With an initial grant of 40,000 dollars from the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, the Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty became a reality. Membership in the Coordinating Council clustered around four district forms of Jewish organizations: metropolitan components of national Jewish organizations; city-wide Jewish organizations and agencies; boroughwide Jewish community councils; and neighborhood Jewish community councils. These councils would provide community action, community education and communal poverty programs. At present, 36 organizations, representing a wide variety of Jewish interests and concerns, serve as members. A response to Jewish poverty must synthesize the dichotomy between personal and community poverty. In the area of personal poverty, recognition must be made of the wealth of existing Jewish resources providing direct aid. The prime concern has been that existing agencies are not sensitive to local needs. Attention has also been called to the diffusion of Jewish resources to non-Jewish segments of the population. An attempt to alleviate Jewish communal poverty should be made through the vehicles of local Jewish community councils. Recognizing this dichotomy of need, it was felt that the Coordinating Council should concentrate upon the problems of communal poverty. (Two copyrighted periodical articles at end of the first document have been deleted.) (Author/JM)

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JEWISH POVERTY ISSUES

"A Coordinated Response to Jewish Poverty"
"Jewish Poverty Measurement Problems"
"How Many Jews in New York?"

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UD 014154

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A COORDINATED RESPONSE TO JEWISH POVERTY

By

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An abridged version of this article may be found in a volume entitled "New Directions in the Jewish Community" published by The Commission on Synagogue Relations of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies."

In 1972, Jewish poverty was publicly recognized by the Jewish community of New York to be a major social problem. Reports of massive Jewish deprivation shocked the composure of the Jewisn community and served as catalysts for the development of a coordinated effort to meet this vital need.

The Myth of Jewish Affluence

Basic to the issue was the credibility of the extent of the problem itself. Jews, as well as non-Jews, simply could not believe that poverty was a major Jewish concern. A false conception of well-being based upon numerous social factors tended to denigrate the extent of Jewish poverty.

The apparent disproportionate representation of Jews in the arts, sciences and professions, coupled with statistical data noting that Jews have a higher median income than other groups, sustained a myth of affluence and overlooked those large numbers of unfortunate Jews on the bottom levels of subsistence. Also, the vast majority of Jews resided in guilded communities where communication and social activities took place only with people of similar styles of life. This created a false assumption that, give or take a few dollars, all were doing reasonably well. Forgotten were the large numbers of Jews who never made the transition from ghetto neighborhoods. These impoverished Jews were invisible to the mainstream of social life.

Another major error was the assumption that since Jews traditionally take care of their own, all were serviced. What was not noted was that the strains of an ever-growing poverty population in an era of marked inflation were stripping the resources of the viable services provided by the Jewish community.

Government Anti-Poverty Programs and the Jewish Poor

To the extent that the problem of Jewish poverty was overlooked by the general population, so too, for the most part, did the issue go unnoticed and underserviced by many governmental agencies. In a recent report prepared for the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, it was estimated that about 140,300 families, including at least 272,000 individuals, or 15.1% of the Jewish population of 1.8 million in New York City, are poor or near poor.[1] The aged constitute just over one-half of the Jewish poor.[2] Yet, a vast number of these poor are not serviced by government anti-poverty programs. This fact is acknowledged by the OEO report on Jewish poverty which states that "since significant numbers of elderly Jewish poor...seem invisible to the area poverty staff (in the Brownsville, Morrisania and Lower East Side communities) credence (is given) to the allegation that Jews are underserved."[3]

Basically, government regulations and administrative practices which were insensitive to the needs of the Jewish poor served as the prime factors for the exclusion of the Jews from government poverty programs. On the federal level, for example, numerous programs and funds were directed to alleviate the plight of minority groups. Yet, federal guidelines define minority groups as members of the Black, Hispanic and American Indian communities. The Jew is not considered a minority group, and thus is not eligible for the special consideration given others.

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1. New York's Jewish Poor and Jewish Working Class - Prepared for the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York by the Center for New York City Affairs, New School for Social Research (Dr. Blanche Bernsetein, Director of Research) November, 1972, p. 1.

2. Ibid., p. 16.

3. OEO Report on Jewish Poverty - Congressional Record, September 27, 1971, p. E 10144.

In 1966 and 1968, the Mayor of New York City, by Executive Order Numbers 28 and 84, established the Council Against Poverty (CAP) as the policy making body for "Earmarked" Community Action funds in the city. The CAP designated 26 target poverty areas and allocated funds to the areas based upon a "fair share" formula which took into account that area's percentage of poverty measured against the city's total. Three major indices were used for the designation of a poverty area:

1. The total number of persons receiving welfare assistance in April, 1965, per 100 total population of each health area;
2. Live births on general services (hospital wards) in 1965 per 100 population;
3. 1965 juvenile delinquency offenses per 100 population between the ages of 7 - 20.[4]

It is obvious that Jewish poverty cannot be measured by such guidelines. Because of the overwhelming number of aged Jewish poor who are certainly not giving birth nor being juvenile delinquents, the last two indices do not apply. In addition, Jews in general have a very low rate of juvenile delinquency. Most important, moreover, Jews have a traditional reluctance to seek welfare assistance. As a result, numerous neighborhoods of Jewish poverty are simply not eligible for programs and are excluded from basic free services.

In addition, Jewish participation has been thwarted by the practice of holding elections for Board of Directors of Community Corporations on the Jewish Sabbath. Though recent legislation prohibits such elections on the Jewish Sabbath, local Jewish groups now find great difficulty overcoming the time loss to achieve effective participation and representation.

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4. New York City Poverty Areas - Published by the New York City Council Against Poverty, pp. 1 plus addendum (p. 5)
See also, the City of New York, Official Directory, 1972, pp. 137-138.

It has been reported, moreover, that Jews in poverty areas were subjected to threats to inhibit them from taking part in anti-poverty elections and projects in the Crown Heights area of Brooklyn. Such reports in other areas are not uncommon.[5] As a result, Jews received only minimum benefits from government programs.

In term of Jewish representation in major decision making agencies, participation was also quite minimal. Indeed, S. Elly Rosen of the Association of Jewish Anti-Poverty Workers officially leveled charges against the New York City Poverty Program in 1971. Though it was shown that Jews were underrepresented in Poverty Boards and did not receive basic services,[6] Jewish representation has not markedly improved in the last two years. The CAP has "51 members of which 17 are elected and appointed officials, 25 representatives of Community Corporations in poverty areas and 9 city-wide representatives of "business, industry, labor, religious, welfare, education or other major groups and interests in the community." In 1972, Jewish representation on the CAP was minimal. The Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, moreover, was the only Jewish organization represented in the 9 city-wide groups.[7]

On a local level, only Williamsburg, Crown Heights and the Mid-West Side Jewish communities were reported to have considerable

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5. The Jewish Poor and the Anti-Poverty Program - Published by the American Jewish Congress, Commission on Urban Affairs, see pp. 32-37

6. Report of findings on charges raised by S. Elly Rosen regarding the New York City Poverty Programs and the Jewish Poor - The Office of Review, Human Resources Administration September 10, 1971... Congressional Record - September 27, 1971, pp. E10144-E10149

7. The City of New York, Official Directory, 1972, pp. 137-138.

representation on local poverty corporations.[8]

Problems of the Jewish Poor

Aside from the credibility gap and restricted government regulations, Jews possess unique problems which differentiate them from the non-Jewish poor. In addition to the elderly, the young, the unemployed, the ill and the mentally disturbed, the Orthodox and Chassidic communities present a particular situation with regard to poverty. Ann Wolfe notes that the Chassidic community has a built-in resistance to secular education which serves as an impediment to benefiting from the economic advantages which educational attainments normally brings. Jewish education drains their financial resources. On religious grounds they oppose birth control and therefore tend to have large families. In the Williamsburg section of New York City, "the median family size is 6.3 children as opposed to the average Jewish family size of 2 children."[9]

These Jews also have the added expense of purchasing kosher (or glatt kosher) food. As a result, they may definitely be living in poverty even though they may earn somewhat more than the official poverty eligibility income level.[10]

In addition, as a result of rapidly changing neighborhoods, large numbers of Jews who were financially unable to move to more stable communities were left behind in ghetto areas. These Jews no longer had the comfort and protection of viable Jewish communal and religious institutions or the companionship of peer group activity. They face a daily experience of loneliness, hopelessness and fear.

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8. OEO Report on Jewish Poverty, Op. cit., p. E 10144.

9. Ann G. Wolfe, "The Invisible Jewish Poor," Journal of Jewish Communal Service, Spring 1972, Vol, XLVIII, No. 3, pp. 6-7.

10. Jack Simcha Cohen, "Jewish Poverty: Measurement Problems," Journal of Jewish Communal Service, Spring 1973, Vol. XLIX, No. 3 pp. 210-213.

Also, there remain large numbers of Jews who, although eligible for public assistance programs, refuse such aid because of their sense of Jewish pride which will not permit them to classify themselves as poor by accepting what is assumed to be a form of charity.[11]

As Jewish leadership began to study the numerous facets of the problem, it became evident that a cooperative, coordinated communal activity was essential.

Underlying this approach was the recognition that Jews have a wealth of organizational resources at their disposal. Yet, due to ideological differences, personal sentiments and past experience, the power of such resources has been diffused into a multiplicity of organizational activities. Each organization went its own way without coordination with others.

It became evident moreover, that the Jews, as a community, had to effectively relate to government in order to insure services to our troubled Jewish poor. Individual power brokers were parcelling out services and funds on the basis of personal political considerations. Effective grass root involvement was minimal and vast numbers of Jews were neglected.

These activities had to stop. Jews had to work together for a common goal. They had to forget old differences and be concerned with new problems; to push aside concepts of ideological purity and remember that they are Jews united by history, tragedy and glory. When it comes to the

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11. Report of the Committee on Communal Planning on Jews in the Inner City, Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, April 10, 1972, pp. 5-6.

needy we have to speak not as Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Secular or Freethinker, but as Jews.

Though such attitudes emanated from a wide variety of sources, the American Jewish Congress and the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York operationalized the concept by proposing, in separate reports, the formation of a city-wide coordinating organization to serve the Jewish poor.[12]

The Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, moreover, noted the immediacy of the problem and authorized the allocation of $1,200,000 to provide special emergency services to the Jewish poor at an annual rate not to exceed $600,000. These funds were divided into three major programs:

1. The development of Neighborhood Service Centers to serve the poor;

2. Additional direct services to individuals and families through existing Federation agencies and through the development of new resources where necessary;

3. The funding of a city-wide agency to plan and coordinate organizational activities in behalf of the Jewish poor.[13]

With an initial grant of $40,000 from the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, the Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty became a reality.

Rabbi Isaac N. Trainin, Director of the Commission on Synagogue Relations of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, was selected to serve as the first Chairman of the Coordinating Council.

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12. See American Jewish Congress Report, op. cit., p. 45.
Federation of Jewish Philanthropies Report, op. cit., p. 15.

13. Ibid., p. 10

Under his able leadership representatives of various Jewish organizations met throughout the Winter, Spring and Summer of 1972 to plan the goals and scope of the organization, as well as to engage staff.

In the Fall of 1972, Mr. Jerome M. Becker, a delegate of the American Jewish Committee, member of the Human Rights Commission and the New York Board of Corrections as well as a noted Jewish communal leader, assumed the Chairmanship of the Coordinating Council. Together with Rabbi Jack Simcha Cohen, Executive Director, he embarked upon a mission of organizing the Jewish community. Through obstacles that plagued the unity of the Jewish people for generations; without mass media coverage or publicity, progress was slowly made through the maze of Jewish organizational life. The constant plea was the needs of the Jewish poor and the necessity to develop a coordinated Jewish voice pertaining to poverty. Granting an equal voice and vote to every Jewish organization regardless of size or scope, the endeavors touched a sensitive chord of Jewish humanity and solidarity. The Jewish organizations came together. Even Jewish organizations that were fighting each other in the courts on specific issues joined hands in meeting the problems of the Jewish poor.

Membership in the Coordinating Council clustered around four distinct forms of Jewish organizations: metropolitan components of national Jewish organizations; city-wide Jewish organizations and agencies; borough-wide Jewish community councils; and neighborhood Jewish community councils. At present, 36 organizations, representing a wide variety of Jewish interests and concerns, serve as members.

As this activity crystallized, governmental agencies began to

realize the power of such a communal effort and related positively to the needs of the Jewish poor. In the Winter of 1972-1973, the Coordinating Council was granted $250,000 by the New York City Human Resources Administration to develop programs to aid the Jewish poor. Also, the City administration began to look upon the Coordinating Council as a major voice in behalf of Jewish poverty as well as the advocate of communal Jewish poverty concerns vis-a-vis governmental agencies.

In the process of developing meaningful programs for the Jewish poor, it became evident that coordination was necessary to fully utilize all resources, eliminate duplication and provide for local participation in the planning and direction of activities.

Thus, it became necessary to articulate the major concern of the Coordinating Council's activities. Basic to the issue was the recognition that a distinction must be made between personal and communal poverty.

Personal poverty relates to the plight of individuals who underconsume a minimum standard of social resources due to a lack of certain natural abilities, education, training, physical or emotional health, luck, motivation or age. The response to such a problem is the development and/or expansion of direct services on an individual basis to provide the type of resources needed to enable the individual to increase his level of consumption. This relates to income supplements, medical services, retraining programs, guidance and proper nutritional diets. Such a program requires coordination among existing resources and implementation through professionally-trained specialists.

Community poverty, however, is a separate and distinct concern. This is the manifestation of impoverished conditions of a large segment of a

population living within a specified spatial area. Such areas may be a slum or an ethnic ghetto. The poverty of such a community may not necessarily be due to personal inabilities, but rather to ethnic orientations, communal attitudes, or structural deficiencies within a specific ethnic group or neighborhood. Local groups may simply be disorganized and thus not able to compete with viable groups from other neighborhoods who actively vie with each other for direction and control of public and private resources. The response to this form of poverty is not in the expansion of individual services but rather in increased communal organizational activity. This requires the formation of an indigenous, unified group representing the institutions and organizations servicing the area. It needs a coordinated instrument to assess communal deficiencies and to utilize general resources available to these areas. Such an activity directs attention to communal programs, develops political action awareness, and seeks liaison with governmental and private social welfare agencies. It also coordinates its programs with the operational agencies who provide direct services to the individual poor.

A response to Jewish poverty must synthesize the above dichotomy of problems. In the area of personal poverty, recognition must be made of the wealth of existing Jewish resources providing direct aid. No one questions the expertise of such services. The prime concern has been that existing agencies are not sensitive to local needs. Attention has also been called to the diffusion of Jewish resources to non-Jewish segments of the population. Such criticism should not engender an attempt to create a new structure for the delivery of services, for such a structure would entail duplication and competition. A more

viable approach would be to redirect, channel and expand existing agencies to provide services to local groups. The redirection and expansion of such services should not done through the guise of paternalism, but rather through cooperative ventures with local representative groups. Thus, existing resources may remain the operational agencies for direct services to meet the needs of personal poverty.

An attempt to alleviate Jewish communal poverty should be made through the vehicles of local Jewish community councils. Communities must organize themselves into viable instrumentalities which should be representative of the diverse Jewish institutions and organizations located in the neighborhood. As a unified organization, each council should assess local communal needs and coordinate local programs of component members. The Jewish community council should be the custodian and spokesman for general Jewish problems in the area. Liaison should be established with existing resources and the existence and extent of Jewish problems should be actively brought to the attention of public and private agencies providing services to the community. Hard data should be acquired concerning the gaps prevalent in existing services and the types of resources required. A local Jewish community council may devote time to general housing problems, participation on local poverty corporations, planning boards, etc.

Recognizing this dichotomy of need, it was felt that the Coordinating Council should concentrate upon the problems of communal poverty and not duplicate the vast network of existing agencies which provide direct services to the individual poor.

Thus, in the arena of personal poverty, the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies expanded its direct services to the needy and planned the development of several innovative programs to serve the unique needs of the Jewish poor. The following three programs highlight this activity.

1. Several neighborhood service centers coordinating the activities of various service agencies were developed. These centers would provide local leadership with an opportunity to share in the planning and direction of services to the poor. (In the communities of Far Rockaway, Queens, and the Concourse, Bronx, these programs have already been established.)

2. The Jewish Association for Services for the Aged (JASA) was given a grant to join together with the Jewish Family Service (JFS) and the Jewish Association for College Youth (JACY) to reach out, identify and serve the isolated Jewish poor in such communities as the Bronwnsville and East New York sections of Brooklyn.

3. The Jewish Family Service (JFS) was given a grant to provide legal services to the Jewish poor as well as to develop a network of volunteer legal services.

The Coordinating Council, on the other hand, concentrated upon coordination of organizational activities, communal poverty problems, and the development and strengthening of Jewish community councils. These councils were to provide community action, community education and communal poverty programs. They would also attempt to involve themselves in all government community participation boards and agencies.

To implement this program, the Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty requested that the Human Resources Administra-

tion utilize part of the $250,000 grant to fund the United Jewish Council of the Lower East Side in Manhattan and the Concourse Jewish Community Council in the Bronx, with $81,760 each to develop local Jewish Community Action Programs. Each Council engaged staff and developed, under the supervision of the Coordinating Council, a variety of meaningful programs. Information and referral services, communal housing problems, block security programs, applications for local government senior day care centers, youth corps jobs, lunch programs, communal meal programs and liaison with government agencies, as well as the development of community profiles were part of the activities of these local councils.

The success of this pilot project is borne out by the plethora of activities and programs that have been generated by the respective agencies under the aegis of the Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty. For example, the Concourse Jewish Community Council has been engaged in the following community action programs:

1. Obtained funding for job slots from the Youth Services Administration;
2. Obtained funding for a summer lunch program serving some 1,500 youngsters;
3. Received a $10,000 grant for a summer recreation program for boys and girls from 8 - 13 years of age;
4. Organized a block security program;
5. Conducted a community-wide forum addressed by the mayoral candidates;
6. Assisted two local houses of worship in the establishment of a Title XVI Senior Citizen Center at their respective locations;
7. Secured a nine-passenger station wagon to provide transportation for senior citizens and the handicapped;
8. Initiated plans for a telephone reassurance program;

9. Intervened with the Department of Sanitation to protect the rights of Sabbath observers living in the vicinity of the Grand Concourse;

10. Established a joint program, in cooperation with landlords and other community agencies, to provide safe housing for the aged and infirm.

During the course of the summer, the Concourse Jewish Community Council staff, with the cooperation of a sizeable contingent of part-time volunteers, has conducted a survey of the Jewish poor. As problem situations are uncovered, contacts are made with appropriate service-providing agencies in the neighborhood.

A similar series of successful programs have also been conducted by the Lower East Side Jewish Community Council. One of that neighborhood's primary concerns is the lack of adequate housing. Thus the Lower East Side Jewish Community Council has been actively engaged in the Seward Park Housing litigation and intervened in similar situations concerning housing eligibility at the Grand Street Guild and the Hester-Allen Street Project.

Among their numerous community action projects are:

1. Encouraging community-wide participation in the local School Board elections;

2. Sponsoring a community-wide forum for city-wide office seekers;

3. Obtaining Youth Corps slots on behalf of all eligible neighborhood institutions;

4. Participating in the community board elections at Gouverneur Hospital;

5. Obtaining Urban Corps interns for assistance in summer research projects;
6. Sponsoring a block security program;
7. Developing a community profile of agencies and available services;
8. Legal Aid;
9. Half-Fare Cards; and
10. Escort Services

The central office of the Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty received a grant of $86,480 from the Human Resources Administration. In addition to the supervision, coordination and direction of the activities of the above-noted local Jewish community councils, the Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty concentrated upon the following activites:

1. Developing new local Jewish community councils in areas wherein they did not exist (The Concourse Jewish Community Council and the Coney Island Jewish Community Council were formed through the efforts of the Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty.)

2. Providing field staff to directly supervise and coordinate the activities of five local Jewish community councils as well as to conduct programs on a smaller scale similar to those developed in the Lower East Side, Manhattan, and the Concourse, Bronx. These Jewish community councils are:

Borough Park, (Brooklyn)
Coney Island, (Brooklyn)
Rockaway Peninsula, (Queens)
Rugby - East Flatbush, (Brooklyn)
Washington Heights - Inwood, (Manhattan)

Funds for this project were made available from HRA accruals and a grant in the summer of 1973 of $40,000 from The Hassidic Corporation for Urban Concerns.

3. Developing surveys of communal needs as well as demographic data regarding the Jewish poor. In this regard, the Coordinating Council has published a survey of communal needs of Coney Island and is conducting ongoing research concerning the needs of communal groups throughout the city. It is in the process of publishing demographic data regarding the Coney Island and Brighton Beach Jewish communities and maintains a library of data relating to the Jewish poor in New York City.

4. Publicizing the existence and extent of poverty in the Jewish community and of governmental and non-governmental programs aimed at dealing with poverty. The Coordinating Council, for example, has constantly issued releases concerning the problems of the Jewish Poor in specific neighborhoods; conducts a regular survey of costs of kosher food; is involved in numerous lectures and mass media (T.V. Programs) concerning Jewish poverty and recently, in cooperation with ABC, was instrumental in developing prime-time T.V. coverage for the problems of the Jewish poor shown on November 10th and November 24th, 1973.

5. Working directly with local Jewish community councils already in existence to expand the representative base of their organizations.

6. Conducting seminars and meetings with Jewish organizations regarding the availability of government as well as private resources.

7. Informing local organizations of the need to be involved with

government community participation agencies and organizations. The Coordinating Council has been extensively involved, for example, in developing Jewish participation throughout the city in local Comprehensive Health Planning Districts.

8. Serving as advocates of the needs of the Jewish poor. The Coordinating Council is regularly called upon to clarify issues affecting Jewish poverty. It has, for example, served as advocates to the Crown Heights Jewish community in helping to diffuse problems relating to the local Jewish Day Care Centers.

9. Serving as liaison with federal, state and city agencies in efforts to secure funds and programs for the Jewish poor.

10. Providing the facilities for mass mailing, reproductions and meetings for local Jewish community councils and other Jewish organizations.

11. Serving as a forum for the development of Jewish responses for problems relating to Jewish Poor.

12. Activating local communities to cooperate with governmental and non-governmental organizations for improvements in crime prevention, housing expansion, community services and similar areas of concern.

13. Directing local communities to develop basic community action services which require the participation of the Jewish Poor themselves which shall directly aid the recipients in satisfying their primary social needs. Last, providing direction, planning, coordination, research, and technical assistance to social welfare agencies and programs dealing with the Jewish Poor.

From the experiences gleaned as a result of the various meaningful projects and activities cited above, the Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty has determined that the alleviation of

a major aspect of the problem of Jewish poverty requires the continuation and expansion of the broad spectrum of programs initiated. A sense of community pride and cohesiveness as well as an attempt to meet the communal problems of the Jewish poor is yet in the stage of infancy. The projects initiated must be given an opportunity to develop to fruition.

As these meaningful activities develop, several major issues appear to be the imminent problems of the Jewish poor which must be resolved.

A. Research

Basic to the problem of research is that "hard demographic data" regarding the extent of Jewish poverty is simply not available. The Jewish community, for a variety of reasons, has constantly negated attempts at including questions of religion on census data. As a result, all population figures are based upon social scientific "guesstimates".[14] These approximations, somewhat tenuous on a city-wide basis, may be totally distorted on a neighborhood level. Also, very few attempts have even been made, at present, to seriously estimate populations in specific neighborhoods.

The Jewish community simply cannot or will not expend the resources necessary to conduct a proper sample survey of the Jewish population. Social scientists maintain that it is necessary to sample a minimum of 500 to 1000 persons in a neighborhood for a decent survey. At present, it is estimated that the total minimum cost for such a survey would be about $60 per person. This means an expenditure of between $30,000 and $60,000 is necessary merely to ascertain the extent of total Jewish population and income levels in one neighborhood. The cost factor appears prohibitive and surveys are, therefore, not commissioned.

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14. For a brief discussion of methods utilized, see, Jack Simcha Cohen, "How Many Jews in Jew York?", Congress Bi-Weekly, December 22, 1972, Vol. 39, No. 15, pp. 12-13.

As a result of such a vacuum of data, the leaders of local Jewish neighborhoods constantly vie with each other promoting emotional claims - not backed by evidence - concerning the relative priorities of their areas and the extent of local Jewish poverty.

This creates the necessity of compiling intensive realistic assessments of the needs of local communities. A partial response to this is the development of a pilot research project conducted by staff of the Coordinating Council in the Coney Island and Brighton Beach Jewish communities. An attempt is being made to assess local resources and needs, delineate demographic data for the neighborhoods and compile a Community Profile of local services. The latter is necessary for local needy people, as well as Jewish leadership, simply are not aware of the resources available in the community. The Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, moreover, has engaged Dr. Blanche Bernstein of the New School for Social Research to expand her Far Rockaway Report and analyze the needs of such communities as Washington Heights, the Concourse and a neighborhood in Queens. Yet, a still greater committment is needed on the part of the Jewish community for the purpose of research in all neighborhoods of the city. It is vital to know the needs of every Jewish community in the city as well as to assess local resources.

B. Jewish Presence in Government Participation Agencies and Organizations

The 70's will dramatically note the proliferation of local community participation boards in various governmental activities. Local communities will have decision making powers not only in local poverty corporations, school boards, and planning districts, but also in community health planning (CHP) boards as well as a multiplicity of other agencies of government.

It is therefore of vital importance for the preservation of Jewish neighborhoods as well as for the development of diverse services to the Jewish poor that there be adequate viable Jewish representation in all such agencies and boards. To insure the Jewish presence in such community participation roles it is necessary to develop numerous delegates who represent communal Jewish interests and constituencies. Thus, it is necessary for all neighborhoods to possess meaningful Jewish community councils to whom local delegates may report the activities of the decision making government bodies in their area. In this regard, for example, the Coordinating Council has endeavored to develop candidates for several CHP boards in cooperation with local Jewish community councils. All local Jewish organizations must join together to develop local councils in order to provide a forum for local Jewish interests as well as a network of representative leaders to serve the Jewish community at large.

C. Coordination of Organizational Activity

A vital problem affecting the Jewish community is that numerous communal leaders are not aware of the various services available to the Jewish poor from both public and private Jewish resources. In addition, there is a lack of coordination among the various meaningful programs conducted by the major Jewish organizations. This necessitates a massive coordinating effort on behalf of the Jewish community. A partial response to this problem may be the development of seminars conducted throughout the Jewish communities of New York City in which leaders of establishment organizations and agencies meet with local community councils to discuss the meshing and coordination of resources and needs. It also means the necessity of developing a directory of services

provided by the Jewish community for the needy of New York City.

D. Government Funds and Political Action

The major problem of the Jewish Poor is that governmental agencies have overlooked their needs. Indeed, proposals submitted by the Coordinating Council to government agencies to fund additional Jewish Community Action Programs were held in abeyance due to claims of lack of resources. Jewish organizations throughout the city must develop a meaningful political awareness to insure that funds are provided to the Jewish Poor. The Jews seek only a fair equitable share of poverty funds to care for their needy. This means that efforts must be made on a local, city-wide, state and federal level to develop programs for the Jewish Poor.

Interwoven into the fabric of any meaningful response to Jewish poverty is the theme of cooperation and coordination. Leaders of Jewish organizational life must maintain close liaison with each other and continue to solidify the bonds of unity. The dichotomy between so-called "establishment" and "grass root" leadership organizations must be eliminated. It is only by acting with a unified and coordinated voice that the Jewish community may effectively alleviate the problems of the Jewish poor.